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GOSPEL ORDER Revised,

Being an Answer to a Book lately set
forth by the Reverend Mr. Ingersoll Mather, President
of Harvard College, &c.

ENTITLED,
The Order of the Gospel, &c.

Dedicated to the Churches of Christ in New-England.

By sundry Ministers of the Gospel in New-England.

Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own Cause seemeth just, but
his Neighbour searcheth him.*

Isa. 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not
according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.*

Printed in the Year 1700.

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ERRATA.

- A**dvert. l. ult. r. it is Printed.
 Ep. Ded. side 3 l. 29. r. ground.
 s. 4 l. 7 r. with. l. 10. r. impose *me*.
 l. 19. r. Anti-Synodalia.
 s. 5 l. 3. r. voluminous.
 s. 6 l. 6. r. banner.
 s. 7 l. 5. r. fell. l. 23. r. inartificial.
 s. 8 l. 13. r. publicly *Preached*.
 Gosp. Ord. p. 9 l. 3. r. that *when*.
 p. 9 l. 16. r. invention.
 p. 10 l. 9. r. notions.
 p. 15 l. 33. r. stumble.
 p. 27 l. 24. r. *together*, l. 32 *that* *as*
- p. 21 l. 11. r. of *these* ways.
 p. 22 l. 14. r. Synodical.
 l. 33. r. we leave the Author to be
chastised.
 p. 23 l. 10. r. without *this*.
 p. 28 l. 27. r. Apostolical.
 l. 38. r. *one* only excepted.
 p. 29 l. 25. r. *these* persons.
 p. 32 l. ult. r. *we'll* for once give *us*.
 p. 34 l. 14. r. *his* book.
 l. 16. r. *more* greater.
 p. 37 l. antep. r. *farre*.
 p. 40 l. 10. r. *as* Humphrey.

The Epistle Dedicatory,
To the Churches of Christ in N. England.

IT can incur no just Censure that we address our selves to the Churches of Christ here in the following Sheets, inasmuch as they are but a Reply to a Book lately dedicated unto them. Nor does our zeal, (we hope) for Truth, the Honour of God, & the Safety, Peace & Flourishing of these Churches come short of what our Reverend Author may be inspired with in his performance. We make the same glorious Pretence with him to maintain & defend the Order of the Gospel, altho' we cannot allow what is suggested in the Title page, That every Principle so strenuously contended for in that Treatise, is either professed or practised by the Churches of Christ in *New-England*. One part, at least, therefore of his Book the Reverend Author ought to have published in his own Name, and not have obtruded it on the Churches here, whose Practice never gave grounds to suspect them leavened with so gross thoughts, as particularly his Doctrine of the Ordination of Ministers is.

We will not guess at the Authors secret aim, or whom in particular he raises his Barriers against. We'd charitably hope he has no private Interest to bribe him in this Affair; and we hope for a like favourable and candid Construction of this Reply. Indeed the Name prefix't to that faulty Treatise, may be presumed, with a multitude of prejudiced People, to weigh down all the Reasons and Arguments

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Arguments which can possibly be brought for their Conviction. And we have no such advantage to boast of; yet are happy in this, that we are not over-awed by any Name, and the Truth we know is greater, and more venerable than all things.

Its well known how liberal some men are of the odious brand of *Apostates*, for every one who cannot digest the late published Orders; but, without arrogance, we assume, as more due, the Title of *Proficients*, and doubt not to make it out, that our dissent from many of them is so far from a going back from any Gospel Truth or Order, that it is rather a making progress, and advancing in the Evangelical Discipline.

It is a groundless Calumny which is suggested, *That a latitude beyond what our Author contends for, is but a betraying the liberties and privileges which our Lord Jesus Christ has given to his Church, or the Brethren of the Church.* These we profess to prize and stand for, and would by no means lose. But wherein do they consist? not in the Brethrens challenging any part of the Ministerial Work! Not in imposing upon others any thing which Christ has not imposed! which is but a debarring Christians of the Privileges they have a right to. But they consist (as we conceive) in such things as these, That our Consciences be not imposed on by Man or their Traditions, Christ being the alone Lord of the Conscience, 1 Cor. 7. 23. That Believers are through Christ, freed from the guilt and dominion of Sin, from the curse of the Law, and from the sting and terror of Death. That we have the liberties of Gods House and Ordinances, & therein communion with God. That we may have the benefit of the gifts of his Ministers for edification, and such like, according to the Apostles Doctrine, 1 Cor. 3. 22. Nor

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Nor is that Objection less frivolous, when if we appear less Rigid than others of the Reverend Authors severity, we are reflected on as casting dishonour on our Parents, & their pious design in the first settlement of this Land. No, we reverence our Ancestors, and the Memory of their divine Zeal and Constancy, and would derive it as a Truth sacred to our Posterity, that it was a religious Interest which carried them through all the amazing Difficulties & Discouragements in that Undertaking. But yet, the particular design or end has been some-what differently conveyed unto us.

Some have carried it as if the great end were the Conversion of the *Heathen*; and there have been great Complaints by some of late, how this has been neglected and contradicted, and another course taken up, whereby instead of bringing the *Heathen* into the Church of God, many whose Fathers and themselves were once of the visible Church, are now strangely left out, scarce any trace of Religion remaining among them.

As for this, we bewail it, and look upon it as a Reproach to the Land, and would therefore countenance no such Principles or Practices as have any tendency to such Apostacy.

Again, some have made this the great Design, to be freed from the Impositions of Men in the Worship of God, wherewith they were sometimes burthened; and as they sought freedom for themselves, we cannot suppose they design'd to impose upon others. In this we are risen up to make good their grounds.

The Reverend Mr. *Willard* in his Sermon of the *sinfulness of Worshipping God with Mens Institutions*, p. 27. gives this as the errand of our fore-Fathers into this Wilderness,

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cornels, namely, to sequester themselves into a quiet corner of the World, where they might enjoy Christs unmixt Institutions, and leave them uncorrupted to Posterity; and the gain-saying or counter working this, is, as he intimates, to cast dishonour upon them, or call them fools.

This Charge falls heavy on those who are for imposing their will on others. We crave no more but to enjoy the Institutions of Christ unmixt. And it appears very strange that those who fled from an Act of Uniformity, should presently impose on themselves, on their Neighbours, and entail the Mischief on their Posterity.

Some indeed would make the design of our first Planters to consist in some little Rites, Modes or Circumstances of Church Discipline, and those such as the Word of God no where requires. These are the men who dishonour their Country, and their Fathers Memory, by making their great design to lie in so small matters. And it is notorious there has been no agreement in these points from the beginning. Its known there was *Anti-Synodalia* printed, and who had a hand in it, and how modest his Dissent was, and in what terms they contradicted what the Synod had established, tho' the like is criminal and insufferable in any other.

These Principles in Church Discipline are also wrote against in English by the *Assembly of Divines*, by Mr. Caudry, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Barly, &c. In a word, if it be the Truth, according to Gods Word, we stand for, it would not be grievous to any of our pious Ancestors, were they now on Earth; neither will it be grievous to them now in Heaven: nor should it be grievous to any good Man to receive Conviction. We refer all therefore to the Word of God, to the Law and to the Testimony.

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In the Preface or Epistle to this Book, we find several things that might be justly excepted against, but designing neither to be contentious nor voluminous, we shall speak but to one or two.

In pag. 8. the Reverend Author is pleased to number up seven or eight erroneous Doctrines, as he apprehends them to be; & the consequence from all is this, that if we espouse these Principles, we give away the whole Congregational Cause at once, Whence we perceive now the professed cause which the Author engages in, tho' we hope it is not the Name or the Party, but the Truths they defend. We shall have occasion to examine these Principles hereafter; it may suffice here to say, they are *grossly & unfairly* worded, & in the Dress they are here clad, we do not espouse them; yet according to their most fair & genuine construction there is a great deal of Truth in most of them. And this is but a block the Author politically casts in the way, which at last we fear may but discourage some from embracing the Congregational way, seeing it must needs fight for its life against some Truths. *Its hard kicking against the pricks.* Acts 9. 5.

Another thing Remarkable in the Preface is the Author's Heat and Warmth, pag 9. *Shall we then by Silence betray the Truth?* Shall we retort, therefore we are bold to speak too. *Who is on the Lord's side?* *Who?* Shall we answer, we are, we trust (through Gods Grace) together with you, and all other siding we would have in contempt. *Is there anyone that will stand up for the Churches of Christ?* God forbid but we should, had others declined it. *The good People in whom they may well think their Watch-men are all cut dead or a sleep:* or if they talk light and heady, they may conclude them in a trance, or not quite awaked.

which

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Whitchouse is it that I dedicate this ensuing Dissertation. And for the same cause we address you in the following answer. It is not my cause, but yours. Nor is it ours, but the Churches, and every good Christians in common. Did I say yours? nay, it is Christi-cause. We lift under the same Banners, and would to God we were all as really, as we would seem to be, divested wholly of carnal self----- for truly our present Defence is become the peculiar concern of these Churches.

But why all this heat? we would not interpret too hard; but these Expressions seem plainly to carry this sense, *That every one who obeys not the late published Orders, is an opposer of Truth, not on the Lords side, Enemies to the cause of Christ, and the Churches of New-England.* Whereupon the Reverend Author rouses himself, and sounds an Alarm to the Churches, *To put down all such.* If this be not involv'd in it, we would beg his Pardon, and be informed better. But truly, *Sir*, it is a mistaken Zeal, idly lavish'd away, and not kindled from above; for we know no such conspiracy against the Truths of our Lord Jesus Christ, or against the good of the Churches in *New-England*, altho' we are not profelyted to some of your particular Opinions. It appears to us, that the Reverend Authors infirmity in this matter, is the same with the Apostle *Johns*, Mark 9. 38. *Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy Name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followed not us.* Which too forward zeal our Lord checks, and reconciles the matter, *Vers. 39. 40. And Jesus answered, forbid him not; he that is not against us is on our part.* But in this case, as in many others we could instance in, if need were, the Reverend Author, tho' very zealous for a time, yet is not very steady & constant; for

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for before he ends his Book, he comes about again, in pag. 239. where he proposeth his Brothers Essay for Union wherein he shows how inconsiderable the Differences are between those of the *Presbyterian* and *Congregational* judgments, that they need not set Truth to purchase Peace. And yet by the cry just now, you would have thought all the Truths of Christ trampled under foot, the Cause of Religion deserted, and a formidable War commenced by the *Presbyterians* against the order of the Gospel.

It is observable, that the Reverend Author in the Dissertation of the following Questions, makes use of abundance of Quotations from several famous Persons in their Generations; but in some the sense is perverted to a wrong end, beside the obvious intension of the Writers; in some he brings them in contradicting at one time what they said at another, and sets some in opposition to others. And where he endeavours to confirm his Tenets by the Testimony of some he might, if he had pleased, have brought many others to contradict the same thing. But this is a good way to amuse the Reader, and to cloud his mind, and to terrifie him, by mustering a legion of intricate Arguments. We shall be sparing in Quotations, and pass by many cited by the Author, tho' we approve them not. Only we crave leave to present one Quotation, which may be of use to us all along, being we are unwilling to be imposed on to believe what God never spoke, or to do what God never requir'd. It is that of the Reverend Mr. *Wilks*, in his fore-quoted Sermon, pag. 23. 24. 'Hence it follows, that there is nothing to be received by us on this account, but what has Gods Seal affixed to it. 'Its therefore enough to set us down resolved against any such thing, if we can say there is a silence about it in the

Scriptures.

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Scripture, that God has nowhere commanded it in his Word, either expressly, or by just and necessary consequence. His Order of his devolving Scripture silence about any Tradition gives a full condemnation, what ever Pleas men may bring for it, as, *That it is profitable, many have been edified by it, it is a prudent way to secure the Interest of Religion: many wise, holy learned Men have pleaded for it, and professed it, that there is much of decency in it, and the thing is self is no waye harmful.* All this is fully answered with that one word, *God has spoke nothing about it.* Heb. 7. 4. *It never entered into his heart to enjoy it.* Jer. 7. 31. Thus he.

This being publicly practised and printed so long ago by so eminent a Minister, and never since contradicted, we take it for granted, that none have any thing to say against it. And we are thankful to him for furnishing us with a Doctrine so fully laid down, to bear off the Institutions, Traditions and Impositions that men would lay upon us.

But it is high time now to consider the Questions which the Reverend Author propounds, and the Answer he gives to each of them. In which attempt we shall offer no other Apology for our brevity, save that our Author himself might have been as brief, and yet full as clear and convincing.

W^hich may be said to be a full answer to the first Question, *What is the true and proper sense of the word Tradition?* The Answer is, *That which is delivered from one generation to another, by the same way, and by the same authority, as the Word of God is delivered from God to man.* This is the true and proper sense of the word Tradition, as it is used in the Bible, and as it is used by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. And it is the same sense in which the word is used in the present Epistle.

Gospel Order Revived, &c.

THe two first Questions might have been wholly spared, yet may serve as a good Introduction to others of an ill aspect.

Quest. 1. Whether particular Churches ought to consist of Saints and true Believers in Christ?

It is granted that the matter of a particular Church (for the Question is not stated with reference to the Catholic) is visible Saints. And tho' the Answer is not given in the words, yet we would charitably hope his sense is the same, with the united Ministers in London. "That none shall be admitted as members in order to Communion, in all the special Ordinances of the Gospel, but such as are knowing and sound in the fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion, without scandal in their Lives, and to a judgment regulated by the word of God, are Persons of visible Godliness and honesty, credibly professing cordial Subjection to Jesus Christ. Had our Reverend Author only said thus much (and indeed more is needless) he had saved us the labour of any Reflections on this part of his Essay. But there is one passage in p. 15 which we cannot but except against. A Scripture, saith he, which has respect to the times of the Gospel, severely rebukes those Ministers, which shall bring men that are uncircumcised in heart (unregenerate persons) into the Sanctuary, into the Church of God, to eat the Bread and drink the Blood, which they that are there partake of, Ezek. 44. 7, 9. A hard saying, and who can bear it. The Text is here mangled, and the principal things left out. What God has joyned, our Reverend Author has separated, to drive on his design. The Text saith Uncircumcised in heart, *and* *unregenerate persons* in flesh: but here we have it only uncircumcised in heart, interpreted unregenerate persons. What a rebuke is this to the best of Ministers because (forsooth) they are not heart-searchers, and dare not invade the prerogative of God. Did the Reverend Author or the Church with him, never admit any unregenerate

p. 15

Unregenerate Person to communion with them? He will not dare to pretend to it, and therefore the rebuke is to himself. We know our Lord Jesus Christ admitted *Judas* uncircumcised in heart, an unregenerate Person to holy things; and in the purest Ages of the Church there were Hypocrites crept in, many of whom turned Apostates. Nay, our Author is so sensible of this, that p. 19. he quotes the opinion of the Reverend *Ab. Cowson*, *That its better to admit diverse Hypocrites than to keep out one sincere Child of God.* It is obvious then that Hypocrites may be admitted, and yet the Minister incur neither the rebukes of Conscience, or of this Scripture: nay, he may be approved of God, as doing his Duty, though Hypocritism may too well consist with sufficient Knowledge, sound Belief, a blameless Life, a credible Profession, &c. To conclude, its very observable, the Reverend Author closes this first Enquiry, by saying, *That the Churches here are free to admit those into their communion, who are thus qualified.* We marvel then his Zeal is not stirred to rebuke them afresh.

But what will the Reader think if we should make an Apology after all for the Reverend Author, and assure him he means no more, than that Ministers ought not to admit known Infidels or Profane, for, for his part, he pretends not to know mens hearts. We only can intreat the Reader not to rebuke the Author too severely for his inconsistency, for he may mean well, and all parties are agreed. Unless he should imagine himself assailed by the Reverend Author of the Doctrine of instituted Churches.

Q. 2. *Whether there ought not to be a Tryal of Persons concerning their qualifications and fitness for Church communion, before they are admitted thereunto?*

We shall not here examine the force of the Authors arguments, whether they undistinctly conclude, or not; and whether the consequence is good from the tryal of the Apostles, the Porters at the Temple, or the 12 Angels at the Gates of the Mystical Jerusalem, to the tryal of Church Members. It suffices that the Reverend Author has modestly stated this Truth, and cited us to a merciful Bar, the judgment seat of a rational Charity, where the Judge avoids severity, and the tryal is managed with abundant tenderness: the
bruised

bruised Reed is not broken, nor the smoking flax quenched: the tender Lambs find the kind Shepherds Arms to fold them, and a gentle carriage in his bosom. This is indeed the part of the good shepherd, and we could now gladly commit our selves to the Reverend authors Pastoral care. So many good words remove all jealousy of a rigid Tryal. But alas! the Clouds return upon us, and a black Doubt is raised, as follows.

Q. 3 *Whether are not the Brethren, and not the Elders of the Church only, to judge concerning the qualifications and fitness of those who are admitted into their Communion?*

The Reverend Author allows there may be a difference of apprehension, as to this point, and yet no breach of Union. We think so too, and therefore as we continue to honour the Person, though we expose his opinion; so we hope the negative will not deterve the popular cry, *Oh Apostacy! Apostacy!* The difference, as the Reverend Author tells us, is between the Brethren of the Presbyterian and the Congregational way, the former giving this power only to the Eldership, the latter joyning the fraternity with them. He takes up for the latter; but whether he proves it, the world may see when we have considered his Arguments.

In the fore-going Chapter, when he would prove there ought to be a tryal of Persons, he tells us of the Porters that were set at the gates of the Temple, 2 Chron. 23. 19 but those Porters were Officers: 1 Chron. 6. 1. so he instances in the Twelve Angels at the Gates of the Mystic Jerusalem, which tho' it may imply that the Guards were kept, yet not that the fraternity were the keepers. He instances also in Phillip and John the Baptist, which if it argues anything, is applicable only to the Officers, and not to the Brotherhood.

But to examine his strength in this Chapter what he calls argument, may more truly be stiled dogmatical reasoning, or a more mean begging the Question. Till pag. 24, 25 he quote a Scripture or two in proof of his assertions, *1st. 1 Corin. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 2. 6.* in both which places the apostle is writing to the Church at Corinth, about excommunicating the Irreligious Person to his sin, and the restoring him again upon his Repentance. And what does the Reverend Author to the same holy Apostle for an answer. He is that known place, *1 Corin. 11. chap.* where he compares the

Church to a mans Body, and shows the distinct offices and operations of the respective Members, as the Eye and Ear, the Hand and Foot. And to render the allusion the more intelligible, he names the Officers God had set over his Church, as more immediately referred to v. 28. God has set some in his Church, first, *Apostles*, secondarily, *Prophets*; thirdly, *Teachers*— and in the close of the 14. chap. he adds, *Let all things be done decently and in order.* The result of all is this.

The Apostle would have every one to keep his proper place and sphere, and do his own work, *scil.* in the Censure of the faulty Person, the Eldership were to do theirs, the Brotherhood not to usurp or arrogate any thing above their Province. For as the Apostle queries, v. 19. *are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers?* In a govern'd Body we cannot expect all should be Governors; *vid. Psal. 134. Minor.*

There is another Text also produced to prove the power of the Brethren, *scil.* *Mat. 18. 17.* and if he shall neglect to hear them, *scil.* *is to the Church.* This Text has been often brought on this account, and sometimes on other accounts and as often answered, yet here brought again, but it will not answer the end.

The Context supposes an Offender, and the wronged party proceeding against him; and here are three steps the dissatisfied Person is directed to take, in order to heal the wound given, 1.) To tell the Offender his fault in private. 2.) To tell him before 2 or 3 witnesses, and if the end be not obtained; 3.) To tell it to the Church. Suppose now a Person acting according to this Rule (as we could give instances if need were) when the first step did not gain his Brother, nor the second answer the end, at last the dissatisfied Person carried the case to the Pastor, and now he reckoned he had told it to the Church. The Pastor sending for the Offender, presently convinced him, brought him to Repentance, and to give satisfaction, and the thing was issued. Here the Rule was attended, the Church told, the offender healed, the wronged Person satisfied, and the matter issued, when the Brotherhood all this while knew nothing of it. It is evident from the next verse, that by the Church must be meant those who had Power to bind and loose, which Power Christ had given to the Apostles. Moreover let the sense be that the Offence is to be told to the Rulers first, and then by them to the multitude

multitude; not for the multitude *to judge of it*, but for their warning and example, for their prayers for the offender, and their approbation of the Elders Censure, and that they might take care to avoid the familiarity of such an infectious sinner, *vid. Pools Answer.*

But if Scripture will not prove the Power of the Brethren, possibly some venerable Maxim may do the feat. *Quod singuli omnes debet ab omnibus approbari.* But alas! this Maxim gives so much to the Sisters, as to the Brethren. Surely it is no divine Oracle, it neither came from Heaven, nor is it according to the manners of men upon Earth. If a master of a family take in a sojourner or a servant; all are concerned, but their vote is not asked. If a Captain lift a Soldier, all the Company is concerned, but it is done by his Authority, without asking their leave. And pray carry this maxim to the College, and see if the President and Fellows will stand by it in their admissions. If it be objected, that even in all these cases if there be any sufficient reasons presented by those concerned, a prudent Ruler will yield to it, we easily grant it, and therefore its not unfit that men be proposed to the Congregation, if there be any thing to object against their lives, &c.

Another argument for the Brethrens Power in admission, is, lest the whole Power should sometimes reside in the hands of a single Minister; and that this is unreasonable we have a Speech quoted from the *Presbyterian Ministers in London.* But it is strangely perverted from their true meaning, as appears not only from the whole Series and scope of the Book, but also from what is expressed in the page quoted (p. 111) where they say, 'That the Power cannot be placed in the whole Church collectively taken. The Scripture makes an exact distinction between Rulers and ruled. They only plead that there should be more Rulers in a Church than one; or that, when there are more, then the Power belongs to the whole meaning, the ruling Elders as well as the Teaching. And what is that to the Power of the Brethren? One officer has Power in plain cases to act in the Kings name.

Indeed our Saviour did frequently send forth his Disciples two and two. But yet *Phillip* was sent alone to baptize the *Ethiopian Eunuch.* It will not excuse a Minister in the neglect of Christs work, because he has no fellow laborers with him,

But

But the strongest argument comes last. *The way to keep Popery out of the World, saith our Author, is for the fraternity to assert and maintain that Power, which does of right belong to them.* In answer to which, we need only blot out the word *fraternity*, and in its room write the word *Elaerhsip*. An excellent argument that will equally prove either way; and by the change of a word serve, also to answer Doctor Owens long Speech, which ends that Chapter.

In short, all Power is firstly in Christs hands, and our Reverend Author produces no commission or order from Christ, for the Brethren to manage the affairs of his House in his name; for he has appointed Officers of his own to that end.

Q. 4. *Whether it is necessary that Persons at their admission into the Church should make a publick relation of the time and manner of their Conversion?*

The Reverend Author answers in the Negative, and adds, that the Churches of N. E. do not impose it, nor ought it to be required or desired. He gives four substantial reasons why it ought not. And had he stop't here, he had done well, or had he added more reasons to those four, as he could have done, it had been an acceptable performance.

But about he wheels again, and seems to plead hard for it, or something like it, which he calls the Practice of the Churches of New England.

This he would recommend from a story receiv'd from the Reverend Mr. Eliot, but we have heard another story from the same Reverend Person, how when one of the Brethren was highly commending his neighbours Relation, and preferring it to others, the said Mr. Eliot turned upon him, and said, *Ab Brother! don't be so much taken with fine words, but look to the mans conversation.* The Author relates another story from the Reverend Mr. Stow, of one who through importunity was brought to make a relation, and made the Congregation weep, when he did it; but whether for joy or grief, we are left in the dark.

The Author gives us his arguments, but they do not reach his end. He pleads for them in that they are edifying; but we have known some that have been no ways so; or granting they were always so, can that justify the instituting and imposing them? would it not be edifying

edifying if every Sabbath day evening, some well disposed (talkative) Brethren should stand up and relate the experiences of the week past? yet shall we make it a law or custom? will not some people assure you, they have been wonderfully edified by a woman's preaching in Publick? and yet will our Reverend Author be induced to prostitute his Pulpit to them, or part with a Salary to cherish their zeal.

Again, the Relation of Experiences is pleaded for, in that God may be Honoured by them. But we have known some to Gods dishonour, being insipid, senseless things, to use our Authors own words, meer formalities, too scandalous and superstitious. He saith, they are a means to gain love with the Children of God. But we have known some that have lost love and credit by them.

but the Question is, Whether they are an instituted means for any of these ends? Whether appointed by God, to promote his glory, edifice the Congregation, or gain love? If not, they are but the Institutions of men, and therefore to be rejected, as the before quoted Mr. Willard instructs us.

God has appointed the preaching the Gospel, the Sacraments, &c. for edification, and the promoting Christian love among his people; but we read nothing of these imposed relations, neither when Christ himself, nor when his Apostles after him, administered this holy Sacrament. Nor is there any appearance of such a Custom in the primitive Church.

Indeed, there are some occasions, as our Author observes, on which a Person who has had a remarkable Conversion, may declare it; but there's neither precept nor rule in the Word of God, that it should be done at this set time, and in publick. And with what face can we impose it, when our Fathers fled from the impositions of men? whether arbitrary impositions are insufferable in themselves, or not; yet certainly they are bold and insolent in New-England, where the greatest out-cry is made against them in others.

But it would make a man smile, were he never so serious or displeased, to read the Texts that are brought for this Custom; as that Psal. 40. 10. *I have not concealed thy Truth from the great Congregation.* And indeed the Royal Prophet had been inexcusable if he had, as a Minister would now, that should not declare to his flock the whole

whole

whole counsel of God.

Again, *Psalm 66. 16.* he says, *Come and bear all you that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul.* We imagine the Reverend Author supposes the *Psalmist* thus calling aloud in some vast religious Concourse, and that in order to his partaking of the privileges of the *Jewish Church*. But should we grant a supposal so ridiculous and extravagant, yet this makes nothing for imposing Relations, for then it should have been spoken and challenged by the People. Do you come, and stand forth, *Sir*, and tell us what God has done for your soul, and then we admit you to all the privileges of the Temple. Another Text, strangely perverted to scare some good people is, that, *Mat. 10. 33.* *Whoever denyeth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* As if there were no confessing Christ, without making formal speeches in the Church.

And as if a credible profession of our faith in Christ, the taking his Name upon us in Baptism, and the renewal of our baptismal Vow, and a devout attendance on the Ordinances of the Gospel, were not the true confession our Lord expects? Wo be to the world, if all were to be rated, deniers of Christ; who whether from inability, modesty or a just indignation, refuse to make a quaint speech in the Church. The last Scripture we shall name, which has been equally abused with the rest, is that in *1. Pet. 3. 15.* *That Christians should be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them, to every one that asketh it;* to wit, in a proper place and time, for a fit end, and on sufficient Reasons, where there is Authority to command, or it is desired with modesty. The sense indeed is, that we should be ready to defend our Faith against the scoffs and cavils of Infidels and Persecutors; and that it is a shame to Christians not to be able to argue for their Religion, and confute gain-sayers. So that if you would infer hence any publick Speech in the Church, it must be rather an *Apology* for the Christian Religion, or a *Sermon* to prove its reasonableness and evidence; but neither is it in the least intimated that this should be made a stated term of Communion; and we are sure the Church has no more power to debar the refuser from any Christian privilege than to require Oaths, Subscriptions, and Conformity to a Thousand more Ceremonies.

We have but one Remark more to make here, and that is, the Apostle requires this reason of our Hope to be given with meekness & fear. The true sense whereof is, that which we are contending even with Infidels, yet we must not argue with an intemperate Passion or Zeal. Or if we construe it, as in opposition to Pride and Presumption of a mans own gifts and abilities; It is a severe Rebuke to many of our bold and forward Zealots, who have been famed for their promptness to speak in the Church, and the first that have fallen under its deserved lash. We should indeed be better reconciled to this custom of Relations, were this prescribed meekness and fear more visible in them. But this is the misery, the more meek and fearful are hereby kept out of Gods House, while the more conceited and presumptuous never boggle at this, or any thing else.

But it seems there is a gross Corruption of this laudable practice which the Author does well to censure; and that is, when some, who have no good intention of their own, get others to devise a Relation for them. The Author may be satisfied there is something of truth in such reports; neither Charity nor Interest should make us too incredulous. But then he passes a severe sentence on such Lyars to the holy Ghost. Which they truly deserve, if in their relations they pretended to tell the time and manner of their Conversion, or if they so much as suggested it to be their own devising; but if it be only a profession of their Faith & Repentance, it is not material who composes it, if they can conscientiously subscribe to it. And indeed a general form might be best of all in the case, if they must needs be made us. To sum up all, we not only believe (with our Author) that such as delude the Church, by bringing relations not of their own devising, do exceedingly provoke the Lord; but also that the imposers of them as a term of Communion, do so too.

Qⁿ. 5. *Has the Church Covenant, as commonly practised in the Churches of New-England, any Scripture foundation?*

In reference to this Question, the Reverend Author and others of his opinion, in their discourses about it, love much to keep in the dark. We confess our selves at a loss about those words (*as commonly practised*) and Solomon has long ago told us, that he that answers a matter before he understands it, it is a folly and shame to him.

The Reverend Author knows we suppose, or if he don't, we do,
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that in some Churches of *N. E.* they have no Church Covenant at all, and that in other Churches it is differently proposed. Some understand by it only a Covenanting with God to perform by his Grace the Duties we owe to him, and our Christian Brethren, & accordingly to propose it; others mean by it a Covenant with a particular Church, whereby they are bound to walk in Communion therewith, till by their consent dismissed. Others will have it to be a necessary Qualification in order to a persons partaking of the Lords Supper, either there or else where; And others have Notions of it quite different from all these.

The Reverend Author first bears us down with a formidable Authority, telling us this Question was considered at a General Convention of the Ministers, *May*, 1698 and that all the Ministers then present save one, did concur in the Affirmative, but we have heard quite otherwise, and that it was then proposed and urged to have the Church Covenant more distinctly opened, though it was not hearkened to. It is a good policy to hurry on a vote their cause depends on, and like a first Principle, it must not be deliberated or debated; and such, as we hear, was the management of that vote. And it is observable the Reverend Author avoids (whether industriously or no, we shall not guess.) to state the nature of this Covenant, but confusedly saith, as it is practised by the Churches in *N. E.*

In the *Preface* we have the Authors own description of this Covenant, where he calls it *explicit Covenanting with God and his Church*, and sometimes with *God and his People*. But we renew our Complaint, that we are yet most miserably in the dark. It might be enquired here, whether it be two distinct Covenants, one with God and the other with his People? if so, which of them is the proper Church Covenant? If but one, whether it binds the person that enters into it, to perform the same Duties to God, and to the Church? and in case a person be dismissed, whether it is from his whole duty or from a part of it? and whether God and his Church Promise the same thing to the party covenanting? These Queries are offer'd only to provoke a clear state of the thing debated, which should be cleared to the understandings of people, before its imposed on their Consciences, as a term of Communion.

But before our Author ends this Chapter, he puts another disguise,
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and a more taking face on this matter. He would insinuate that the Church Covenant, as practised in *New-England*, is nothing more than the publick Profession of Faith, and promise of a holy Life; for which he quotes both Synods and several private Reverend mens Names. But this unfair dealing may be stript of its disguise, by shewing in what sense we allow a Church Covenant, and in what sense we allow it not.

1st. We own and plead for a Covenant with God, whereby a Person or People become his, and bind themselves to walk in all his ways. This was the Covenant that constituted *Israel* of old to be a Church and People of God, and which God made with *Abraham* and his Seed, after him, by which he became, in a special manner, their God, and they his People. This is the Covenant that *Israel* renewed with God in the Wilderness, *Leut.* 26. 17, 18. To this God annexed his Seals, *Circumcision* in the days of old, and *Baptism* under the Gospel. Its by this Covenant that a Person or People are united to Christ the head, and do become Members of his Body. By this the Catholick Church is constituted, and we have an Interest in all those Priviledges that belong to Believers, as such. This is the Covenant we own, and which we renew every time we attend the publick Worship of God, *Psal.* 50. 5. and this Covenant ought to be explicit, openly professed and published to the World. It is a false and abusive insinuation (but frequently made in an awful Desk) that People are against all explicit Covenanting, or the open renewal of it; for there is no pretence for such a Calumny, that we can bear of: It must therefore arise either from idle Fears, or some mischievous Policy.

2^{dly}. We also highly approve of a Covenant of Reformation. A great Duty in times of Apostacy, and gross corruption of Manners; to covenant to put away these and those reigning sins, to return to the Lord, and perform such particular Duties as have been visibly neglected. Of this we have frequent instances in Scripture, *Exra* 10. 3. 5.

3^{dly}. We may also allow a Covenant between Minister & People, whereby they bind themselves to those respective Duties, that the Word of God has made incumbent on them, on account of that Relation.

But we altogether deny a Church Covenant in the following sense,
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and say, Our Lord Jesus Christ has no where appointed in his Word, that there should be a Covenant enter'd into by some Persons of a Christian Society, exclusive of the rest, whereby they being in Covenant one with another, should thereby call themselves a Church of Christ, making the Ordinances of Christ, or any of them to depend on this Covenant, so that those who scruple it, or refuse to joyn in it, shall on that account, not enjoy them. And that those who are thus covenanted, or the major part of them, have power to make or unmake Officers, to admit or reject Church Members, to manage Discipline, to order the affairs of Christs House in his Name, as if they had warrant and commission from him so to do. Of such a Church Covenant neither *Moses*, nor Christ himself, the Prophets nor the Apostles have spoke any thing. None of the Scriptures, Arguments or Quotations of our Reverend Author prove any thing of it. We will take leave therefore to call it Mans Covenant, and not Gods, for it has not Gods Seal affixed to it; & though good, wise or learned men may endeavour to obtrude it, and plead, its harmless, edifying, or for the Interest of Religion, yet according to the afore-quoted Rule of the reverend Mr. *Willard*, we are to reject it, and shall do so, till it comes with a divine Stamp.

But possibly this may be called a *Misrepresentation*. You will say, Who owns it, or will plead for it in this Dress? *We Answer*, by querying, Whether there be not several that own and plead for the things contained in it? We wish there were a less Number. But to evince it, let us take it into the several parts. Are there none that plead for a seperate Covenant, which some (and generally the lesser part) must enter into? and it is be good, and for good ends, why must so many be excluded? If it be to reform Manners, if to maintain the Ministry and Worship of God, if to lay stricter Bonds of Duty, if to bring men more effectually to submit to Discipline, why then are not the whole brought in? for the whole Congregation are oblig'd to these Duties, and why must the Covenant be seperate?

Again, do not some plead, it is requisite, in order to a Persons partaking of the Lords Supper? But did our Lord Jesus Christ require any such thing when he first instituted that holy Sacrament? Did the Apostles when they administred it? Was it the term of Communion in the primitive Church? or where is the Scripture that commands

it? and why should Gods holy Ordinances be annexed to Mans Covenant? Again, do not some plead, that those who shus covenant, have the Power to make and unmake Officers? The Reverend Author will not scape here, whose Opinion in this matter we shall see hereafter. And, finally, do not some pretend, That these are the Persons commissioned by Christ, for the admitting and rejecting of Church Members? This the Reverend Author defends with all his Might, under the third Question, tho', as we showed, he could find no Proof. And so much for the Church Covenant, which is a stranger to the Scripture, and has no foundation in the Word of God.

Q. 6. *Is publick Reading of the Scriptures, without explication or exhortation therewith, part of the Work incumbent on a Minister of the Gospel?*

The Author does not mean, (as we suppose,) If there be no explication or exhortation throughout the whole time of exercise. If he doth, he fights with the air, for we know no Sect of Men but have some explication, tho' many among us neglect reading. We therefore take his sense to be this, If no explication follow immediately without the interposition of Prayer, or any other part of divine Worship. For we conceive that the ordinary preaching the Word may very properly be call'd *exposition, explication & exhortation*, and that in every Sermon there is a competent portion of Scripture for one time explicated and applyed. Nor can we imagin, the Reverend Author means that every clause a Minister reads in publick should be in a formal manner explicated: Methinks it should satisfy, if after one or more Chapters read, some select clause, verse or paragraph be insisted on and expounded, i. e. chosen as a Text, and preached on.

We are obliged to the Author, if but for quoring the Text in *Timothy*, where it is given him in charge, as his Ministerial Work, *To give attendance to Reading, as well as to Doctrine & Exhortation*. That the Jews were wont to read the Scriptures in their Synagogues, saith the Reverend Author, we all know; and that it was their Duty to read the Scripture at some set and solemn Times, we also know; for so it was appointed, *Deut. 31. 11*. Again, he grants that in *Justin Martyr's* time the Scriptures were read, and thereupon followed a Sermon.

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We should have been thankful if he had added more Proofs, by way of Encouragement (as he could easily have done) and thereby confirmed some that are apt to stagger. He could have told how the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, do order and advise to it: He could have quoted the many famous Churches that do practise it at this day: He could have named several famous Ministers in *England*, and some in *New-England*; that plead for it, and practise it. He could have told of more than the Bishop of *Derry* that complain of the neglect of it, and that (to use the words of a most eminent Divine not far from us) *as the most just Reproach that the Churches of New-England labour under.* He could have told, for encouragement, that it is a clause in our publick Confession of Faith in *New-England*, chap. 22: which treats of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath day, *Scilicet*, 9: *The reading the Scriptures, Preaching and hearing the Word of God, singing of Psalms, as also the Administration of Baptism and the Lords Supper, are all parts of the Religious Worship of God, to be performed in Obedience to God with Understanding, Faith, Reverence and godly fear.* Finally, He could have told us (had he searched all our *New-England* Antiquities on this head) how in the Preface to our Version of the *Psalms*, the reading of *David's Psalms as other Scriptures* in Churches, is taught to be one end of them, as well as singing of them, which is another end. It is ridiculous to say, that reading, with exposition is here meant; for then why was it not so said?

However, it looks very oddly, that they who neither read nor expound, should talk so much, and quote so many Names, as our Author has done, for a Practice which they never intended to come up unto.

We have heard what our Author has said, and much more that he could have said to encourage this good practice: His Discouragements follow.

And first, he brands it with a hard uncouth Name, and twice tells us, that some call it *Dumb Reading*. We wish he had named those that so term it. There is so much Venom in the Epithite, and so complicated a Malignity in the Phrase, that we fear its infections, and may propagate a Spirit of Pride, & contempt of his Neighbours, and Irreverence to his Maker. The Author well thought, so odious a Mark on the Front, would give all honest People a disgust to so villanous

villanous and stigmatiz'd a Practice. But his Policy has failed him, for it raises a just indignation in all sensible and ingenious Christians. We will for once inform the Reverend Author, that the Scriptures are read in Churches audibly and intelligibly. Nor can we guess what Dumb reading should mean, unless when men sleep over their Books; and in charity to the Author, we wish he had been a sleep when this unlucky word dropt from his Pen.

We are further beholden to the Author for his judgment, that the reading of one Chapter, with a brief explication, will edifie the Congregation more than the bare reading of twenty Chapters. But this is only his single Opinion, and as it will not weigh against the daily experience of thousands of People, who must judge for themselves; so neither does it savour of modesty, to think any one of his Sermons, or short Comments, can edifie more than the reading of twenty Chapters. We would not charge on the Reverend Author all the hard consequences of his own words, or we should say, that it is audacious so vilely to disparage the Inspirations of God. Alas! Sir, the Scripture wants nothing of ours to make it Perfect. We have the Confessions of many who have come to hear the Word read with prejudice, that God gives it authority from the lips of the Minister. And we know, that as all Scripture is given by *Inspiration of God*, so it is in it self profitable (without any help or advantage from us) for *Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*—to perfect the Man of God, the Minister as well as his People; and if it were not so in it self, it could not be so by being explained. Here let our Confession of Faith speak for us, chap. 1. Sect. 7. *All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for Salvation, are so clearly propounded & opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.*

There is one Argument in pag 47, 48. brought by the Reverend Author against this Dumb Reading, but so pitious a stumble, so miserable an in consequence, that we are loath to name it.

To issue this Head, we are more and more confirmed, that the reading Gods Word in the great Congregation, is so far from being offensive to God, that it is the greatest Reverence and Honour we can do it, and the most suitable acknowledgment we can make to him,

him, who in mercy has given us his Word, and will judge the World by it at the great Day.

Qu. 70. *Is Baptism to be administered to all Children, whom any professing Christians shall engage to see educated in the Christian Religion?*

The Reverend Author, according to his wonted Bounty, at first dash concedes to us, that he will not oppose the adoptive right. We then declare our selves satisfied, and crave no more; for we do not conceive that any man can engage or undertake for the Education of a Child in the Christian Religion, unless he has the Authority of a Parent devolved on him, for the government of the Child. Nor would any conscientious Minister accept the engagement of one who has no power or ability to perform his Vows. So that this engagement necessarily implies the care and authority of a Father, and consequently there is an adoptive Right to Baptism.

But the Author stumbles at the phrase, *professed Christians*, and seems to think that the Question, if carried in the Affirmative, would conclude for *Papists*, *Socinians*, and the grossest Hereticks, as also for the most notorious Profligates, and prophane Persons; as if it ever entered into the heart of a *Protestant Divine* to accept the Engagement of some lewd Debaucher or professed *Papist* to institute his Child for the Devil or Popery. Our complaint here is the same that the Reverend Mr. How once made of his Adversaries, *That he gravely falls & compassing with his own Man of Straw, and so we are to be tortured in Effigie.* But to pacifie him, we would inform him what a charitable Man would undertake by a *professed Christian*, viz. the same that our Catechism does, when it instructs us, That Baptism is not to be administered to any till they profess their Faith in Christ, and obedience to him. We leave our Author ther fore to fight it out with that Reverend Assembly, for truly his Argument is formidable against them, in as much as *Papists*, *Socinians*, *Hereticks*, the *Prophane*, &c. do all profess their Faith in Christ, and Obedience to him. Such is the Power of Interest, Faction, Passion and personal Opposition, that it blinds a Man on a sudden to fight with those Truths which he has learned and revered from his Infancy.

Qⁿ. 8. Is Baptism in a private House, where there is no Church Assembly, allowable?

The Question seems to grant, there may be a Church Assembly in a private House (as we read, *Rom. 16. 5. Phil. 2.*) so there may be a publick place, and no Assembly.

We agree with the Reverend Author, that Baptism is a part of the publick Ministry, nor may it be administered by one who is not called to the publick Ministry; neither should it usually and ordinarily be administered but in a full Congregation, and in the most publick manner, nor would we drop a word to discourage so pious a Practice.

Yet, let the Congregation be never so great, if the Administrator be not a publick Minister, commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ, it may be called private Baptism, and altogether unallowable; and if the number of people be small, and the place otherwise private, yet if the Administrator be a publick Officer and Minister of Christ, the Baptism may in a sense be called Publick, and in some cases (as that of dangerous sicknels) not only allowable but necessary, and a duty. When a Justice of the Peace acts in his Office, though but few are present, yet they are acts of publick Authority, as truly as those done in higher Courts, and with greater solemnity. Altho among us, where Churches are orderly settled, there is little occasion either for private preaching or Baptism, it being certain the more publick both are, the more God and his Ordinances are honoured, & the general profit of his people consulted.

But yet (as was hinted before) there are some cases of necessity, wherein its ones duty to seek a more private Baptism; the providence of God not permitting a more publick attendance, and no Minister ought to refuse their desire.

As for instance, in apparent danger of death, it would be cruelty to deny such a request, if privacy be the only Objection. We need not suggest, that all what we call private Baptism there may be a competent number of people present; the neighbourhood being called in, and notice given to some of the Brethren of the Church. We observe a good Medium herein between the two dangerous extremes. We avoid all unnecessary & common Baptizing in private, for which our Brethren in England are so very faulty; and we would

would correct our own defects here at home, in refusing to Baptize in private, be the extremity never so great, or life never so hazardous. Not that we are at all tinged with the error of St. *Austin*, namely, a persuasion of the absolute necessity of Baptism to Salvation: but we esteem it the most publick owning of God which the State of the person admits of, or the providence of God as present allows; and it is good to be found in the way of blessing, and we may expect that God will bless his own Institutions.

But the lawfulness of private Baptism, in cases of necessity, abundantly appears from that One instance of the Goaler, *Acts* 16. 33. To which our Author answers, St. *Paul* was an extraordinary Officer. But by his leave, that is nothing to the purpose; for the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel succeed the Apostles in those things that are of an ordinary and standing nature in the Church, as Baptism is. Indeed, his other reason is good, that it was difficult, if not impossible to get a Congregation of Christians; and therefore necessity was put upon the Apostle to Baptize the Goaler and family in private; which plainly holds forth thus much, that in like cases of necessity, as in times of persecution, danger of Death &c. the same practice is allowable and a duty; wherein we have the promise of Christ's gracious Presence with us, as well as when it is administered in a larger Congregation. *Mat.* 18. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Q. 9. *Ought all that contribute towards the maintenance to have the privilege of voting in the Election of a Pastor?*

The Reverend Author in the very first line of his answer to this question, throats in a most unkind imputation, and not altogether free from Calumny, as if the affirmative could not be maintained, but the charge of *Simony* must be incurred.

We therefore once for all profess, that we abhor as much as he pretends to do, the thought that Money should purchase us Church privileges; but this is so wide a Ramble that it is not worth while to say more to it.

All the Authors arguments under this head infer only that it is the Churches privilege to chuse their own Minister. And under his 4th argument he tells us, that nothing is more evident, than that in the

first Ages of the Church, Pastors were chosen by all and only their flocks. Which we verily believe, nor could he have expressed the truth in more apt words. For long since he has taught us, *That adult baptized Persons are of the Church*, and undeniably proved it in his Treatise annexed to the first Principles of *New-England*, under which denomination they claim the privilege of voting in the election of a Minister.

Indeed there is one argument at first blush seems pretty plausible, p. 68. for them who have no right to the Lords Supper themselves, to appoint who shall be the Dispenser of that Ordinance to others, is highly irrational.

We Answer; The administration of the Lords Supper is but one part of a Ministers work, and but a little part, compared with all the rest. Let us turn the argument then, and say, For some few to appoint who shall be the Preacher to the whole Congregation, is as highly irrational.

Suppose we (what is frequent in this Country) thirty or forty Communicants, and it may be two hundred to be admitted in convenient time; is it not every whit as absurd, that not one of these who are to be examined, prepared and admitted to this holy Ordinance, shall have liberty to chuse the Person who shall do this Work for them; but the Person must be altogether chose by others, whom he has not this Work to do for. A hopeful argument that will help both sides!

The Reverend Author calls it *A privilege purchased for the Communicants Only by the Blood of Christ*; but he gives no proof at all of any such Appropriation, and leaves us yet in the firm belief, that the Privilege is purchased for the whole Flock, who had need stand for their own.

We might here borrow of the Author the Maxim he gave us in another case, *Quod tangit omnes debet ab omnibus approbari*. It was exploded in the other case, but if he will give us leave to put in *Aequaliter* (*Quod tangit omnes aequaliter*, &c.) then it would suit the case, and afford him some conviction.

The Reverend Author also gives us another Maxim in pag. 87. with this Elogium, *That it has its foundation in Nature and Reason*, though we are sure it makes strongly against him here, namely, *That which pertains to all is not valid, if some of all sorts have not a consent in it*; for

some places have no Communicants, and there all grant this Right and Priviledge belongs to the whole: if afterwards they come to have some Communicants, by what Rule or Reason do they take away that Priviledge which belonged to others before? In short, let our Author find one Text that limits or confines it to the Communicants alone, and then deprive the Majority.

But since Scripture fails him, he has another Refuge, viz. the Authority of the Synod, and the Law of the Land. The last of these we think excepts *Boston*, and of both we need only say, that as they were done by men, so they may be altered and undone by the same men, when they please.

It is also hinted, *That this may prove fatal to the Churches*. But there is no danger, Truth does no harm; and we rather think it may be retorted on the Author and his Practice. There was lately a grievous Complaint made by a principal Man of *Swanzy*, before some Ministers and others, That the Law which gives the Power to the Communicants only to call a Minister, is like to ruin them and their Posterity forever, by excluding them from an able and orthodox Ministry, and the Ordinances; for the *Baptists* taking advantage thereby, have set up a gifted Brother, and spoil the place of the publick Ministry.

Qu. 10. *Is it expedient that Churches should enter into a Consociation or Agreement that matters of more than ordinary Importance, such as the gathering a new Church, the Ordination, Deposition, or Translation of a Pastor, be done with common consent?*

The Reverend Author answers, *That it is both expedient and necessary*; though he had answered as well, had he said, *It is also very needless*. But lest we be mis-understood in this matter, let the Reader carefully observe, We do not mean that the Communion, or Fellowship, or Prayer, or Assistance, or Duties that the Church or People of God owe to one another, are needless. But for particular Churches, that are parts, and result from the Catholick, and are united to the Head, and in Covenant with him, and bound to perform all Duties both to the Head & to all the Members reflectively; for such to talk of entering into an agreement on this account, seems very idle and needless. To illustrate the matter; If a Servant has bound

bound himself to a Master, he need not go to make new Covenants to carry it dutifully to the Mistress, lovingly to the Children, faithfully to the fellow Servants, this being all contained in the Masters Covenant. So, if a Person marry a Husband, she has no need to make a new Covenant with his Father, that he shall be her Father, or that his Brothers, Sisters or other Relations shall become hers, this being all implied in the Marriage Covenant: The respective Duties must be performed, but there is no need of new agreements or covenants to be entered into. Mr. Burroughs, as quoted by the Reverend Author, expresses this well. *They are bound in Conscience to give an account of the wayes to Churches about them, or to any other who shall require it; and this not in an Arbitrary way, but as a Duty they owe to God and Man.* The United Brethren in London speak yet more fully in the Chapter of *Communion of Churches*, §. 1. *We agree that particular Churches ought not to walk so distinct and separate from each other, as not to have care and tenderness to one another. But their Pastors ought so have frequent Meetings together, that by mutual advice, support, encouragement and brotherly intercourse, they may strengthen the hearts and hands of each other in the ways of the Lord.* We may add here the whole Chapter of occasional Meetings of Ministers, and so dismiss this Question.

QU. 11. *May the Brethren in Churches, and not the Pastors only, be sent unto, and have their Voice in Ecclesiastical Councils?*

It is to be observed, that by this means the Brethren in a Synod will surpass the Elders in Number, and by a Cabal may easily out vote them. Wherefore we can never believe that our Lord Jesus Christ has left every private Brother an equal Vote with any of his Officers, in ruling or managing his Church. It will be granted that the advantage is of the Elders side, as to Learning, Prudence, Parts, Piety, Zeal and Devotion, at least, taking the whole Synod together; yet that men of mean Parts, no Education, nor under the awe of an Office that obliges to the care of Souls peculiarly, should be equalled to the former in all Decisions, tho' not Debates, whereof they are incapable, is very unaccountable. Indeed, had our Lord in his Word positively required this, we might expect that his Spirit of Council

Counsel would more abundantly reside on the weaker Vessels; but otherwise, to fill a Council from the Plough, and the Stall, is a tempting Devil, and betraying the Church. Neither are we ignorant what Took they are in the hands of any one designing Man of a Reverend and August Name, let his Opinions be what they will; these are Biggots, and the Man is himself a Synod. We confess such a Man would be tempted to stand up for the Brethrens Authority, which is his own support, and the mean while the Church is like to be well govern'd.

But what is a further Outrage to the sacred Office, the Author will not let Ministers sit as Officers of Christ, or as Persons authorized by him; for thus he expresses himself, pag. 86. *Its not their Office, but the Churches Delegation, that gives Power to the Members of Synods, the specifying Act in which Synod all Power, and so the right of a decisive Vote is founded, is the Churches Delegation.* And to prove this, he instanceth in the first Synod that ever sat, as he terms that Acts 15. a Copy and Samplar left to all succeeding Generations. But how Comical is this? as if that was so constituted, or its Members delegated by particular Churches. Or, how long had this inspired Synod sat before that case was brought before them? or were they summoned upon this single occasion? Truly the Author begs the whole, and proves nothing of it.

Indeed, the Reverend Author tells us in the same page, *That of these Delegates from the Churches, the Elders ought to be the principal, or principally concerned.* A mighty grace indeed! yet even this cannot be allowed, and be consistent with himself; for in the next page he tells us, *There are some Brethren in the Churches, whose Gifts and Abilities are beyond their Pastors, and some again are more Noble and Honourable.* Now if they are alike delegated, and those can act no more in the Name of Christ than the other, pray why should they be the principal? Why may not a brother of equal Authority assume and arrogate the first place to himself, which if he chance to do, we leave the Author to be catechized by him, and to do Penance patiently by his own Principles.

Qn. 12. *Doth the Essence of a Ministers Call consist in his being Ordained with the imposition of hands by other Ministers?*

Qu. 13. *May a Man be ordained a Pastor, except to a particular Church, and in the presence of said Church?*

We joyn these two together, partly because they are of near affinity, and partly because some things the Reverend Author asserts under one of them, may indifferently be referred to the other. Our chief Exceptions may be reduced to these five.

1st. That he asserts, The essence of a Ministers Call consists in a mutual Election between him and his People, pag 91. If we understand the Author, he mean, that a person cannot be a Minister without his mutual Election, and that with it he may, and is. He had just before noted, that some think the essence of the Ministry to lie in Ordination; others, in its being done by a Bishop; *Wisch last Norton cuts off* (saith he) *most of the Ministers in France, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Scotland, &c.* But, to retort your words, Sir, we think that your assertion cuts off more both for Number and for Eminence. It cuts off the Prophets, the Apostles and Evangelists! It cuts off all the Bishops that are and have been. And though these in general, may signify little with our Reverend Author, yet some of them he mentions as great and eminent Lights. He cuts off Thousands of Presbyters, famous Ministers, who apprehending the Essence of their Ministerial Call to lie in their being ordained and sent of God, do wholy wave this mutual Election, as a little thing.

The Scripture speaks very highly and honourably of the Ministerial Calling. They are called Ministers of God, of Christ, of the New Testament, of the Gospel: Ministers in the Lord, Ambassadors for Christ; Angels, Lights, Stewards of the Mysteries of God, &c. All which shews, that not only the Essence, but the Excellency of the Ministry consists in their Relation to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that separate and sacred Work that the holy Ghost has called them unto, *Act. 13. 2.* But what Scripture intimates to us, That their Essence or Eminency lies in their Relation to this or that particular People? The Prophets of old never pleaded their Election by Man, but that they were called, sent, ordained and commissioned by God.

The Authors chief Argument here is a Supposition of Shipwreck upon

upon some desolate Island: and we easily grant, that one of the Company being elected, may become a Minister of God unto them, but it is more from the Providence and Call of God, than their Election. Its God must furnish him with Ministerial Gifts Its God must incline him to undertake it: Its God that stirs up the People to receive and entertain him as a Minister: God gives success to his Ministry, &c. But besides this, it is to be considered, that God does not tie himself to those means which he has tied us unto in ordinary cases; according to that usual saying, *Jus divinum positivum cedit juri divino Naturali*. The case is wholly extraordinary, and God that makes the Necessity will also dispence with our unavoidable Compliance.

Were our Author in the right, the sinful Will of Man, whereon the Election does depend, might frustrate the whole Ministry that Christ has instituted. But, alas! whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, our Lord will send his Ministers; and whether Men will call them or no, they shall be forced so to confess, *Verily, we had Prophets among us*, Ezek. 33. 23.

We wonder also, that they who insist upon it, That it is Christ's peculiar Prerogative to state his own Worship, should spoil him of another part of it, to make his own Officers. If the People may do one, why not the other? And it increases our Wonder, that the Reverend Author should revive this Assertion at this time of day, Forty six years after it has been so learnedly and so fully refuted in *Jus Divinum Ministerij Evangelici*, published by the Provincial Assembly of London, chap. 9. without taking Notice of their Answers and Arguments.

2dly. We shall pass by several things in these Chapters, which in a severe Disquisition, we might justly except against. Our second Charge is, That he makes imposition of hands a little unnecessary Ceremony. Though we can distinguish between Ordination and Imposition of Hands, and approve what the afore-mentioned Assembly says, pag. 157. We must distinguish between the Substance, Essence and formal Act of Ordination, and the Rite used therein. The Essential Act of Ordination is the constituting or appointing a man to be a Minister, or the sending him with Power and Authority to preach the Gospel; The Rite

Rite is Imposition of hands. Yet we can see no reason why this Rite, being of divine Institution, 1 Tim. 5. 22. used by the Apostles, the primitive Church, and generally since the Reformation, should now be run down as so trifling a Ceremony. We know the Reverend Author could have quoted a whole Leaf of famous Authors, who speak highly for it. If the Provincial Assembly at London displease him, the New-England Plat-form may satisfy him, *That Church Officers are not only to be chosen by the Church, but also ordained by Imposition of hands, and Prayer*; or the Answer to the 32 Questions, that says expressly, *Ordination is necessary by divine Institution.* But, is the Author indeed disquieted at the imposition of hands, because but a Ceremony? It is but looking back to pag 80. and we shall see he as much magnifies and contends for as their a Rite, to be sure, *just the right hand of fellowship.*

The Reverend Author not only speaks meanly of the laying on of hands of the Presbytery, but he too much countenances the Imposition of hands by Brethren, or Persons out of Office. His Text of Scripture, *Numb. 8, 9, 10.* respecting the Children of *Israel's* putting their hands on the *Levites*, is so fully and punctually answered, by the Provincial Assembly of London, pag 188. that we remit the Reader thither, for we love not to transcribe. In the New Testament he owns there is no instance of Persons out of Office imposing hands. And notwithstanding all his instances, the Apostolic assertion stands good, *1 Cor. 7. 7.* and without all contradiction, the Act is blessed of the greater.

The Authors next Essay is, to remove the weighty Objection, *That none can give what himself hath not.* And this he does by some Similitudes. To touch upon one, pag 99. *A Woman (saith he) by giving her self in Marriage, causeth the Man, to whom she giveth her self, to have the power of a Husband; but no man will be so absurd as to say, that a Woman has formally the power of an Husband.*

A poor Return indeed, to so weighty an Objection! An unmarried Woman has power over her self, to rule and govern her self and her Actions, as fully as the Husband has, when she is married: though a particular Church, without any Officer, has not power to feed, teach, govern themselves, and administer Ordinances. Hence a plain Disparity! Moreover, it is grossly absurd to affirm, that the

the Wife gives the Power to the Husband. Indeed, he gives her self, but it is the Institution and Command of God, that gives the Power; and could we suppose that to be laid aside, they would be equal. To be sure, if Women once get this Notion by the end, that they give the Power to their Husbands, we should soon have them indeating, limiting and reserving in part to themselves, by a Marriage Contract, as well their Power and Authority, as their Estates.

4ly. The Author asserts, That no man ought to be ordained a Pastor, except unto a particular Church, pag. 101. Which kind of Doctrine doth indeed startle us, because it manifests the Reverend Author to be very unstable in his Judgment. It is credibly reported, That at a general Convention of Ministers at Boston, May 26. 1698. (and there are enough yet living, who knew the truth of it, to whom we appeal) this Question was discussed, Whether a Minister might be ordained, though he had, as yet, no particular Church, in order to the Administration of Baptism, and the gathering & settling a Church? This, as we are told, had a more peculiar reference to Mr. Clap's Station at Rhode-Island, and it was voted and carried in the Affirmative; and what is yet stranger, was lead on and put to the Vote by the Author himself, he being the Moderator of the Assembly. Upon this conclusion Mr. Williams was ordained in the Colledge Hall, in order to his Voyage to Barbadoes. Now is it wonderful to us, how the contrary to that which was a truth two years ago, should obtain now. Possibly the Reverend Author's modesty won't suffer him to think the Balance equal, or we would put the late Vote of May, 98. in the Scale against the Council of Calcedon, p. 105.

5ly, We crave the Readers patience, and will offer but one Remark upon the set two Chapters. In pag. 102. its said, *Pastor and Flock are Relates, and therefore one cannot be without the other. It is contrary to the Rules of Reason (as Logicians know) that the Relate should be without its Correlate. To say, that a wandering Levite, who has no Flock, is a Pastor, is as good sense as to say, that he who has no Children is a Father, and the Man who has no Wife, is a Husband.*

This is worn thread-bare, and answered long ago by the Assembly

at London, and others, and sometimes by the Author himself. A Minister may be considered under a double Notion, as a Minister of Christ, or of this or that particular Church. In this latter sense they are Relate & Correlate, and no otherwise. Hence, if he leaves them, he ceases to be their Minister, and they cease to be his Flock; but still he may be a Minister of Christ, and they a Church of Christ. And thus in that list: Book that is entituled, *The judgment of several Divines of the Congregational way*, concerning a Pastors Power occasionally to exert Ministerial acts in another Church, besides that which is his particular Flock; the Reverend Author expresses himself after this manner, pag. 1. *The Ministerial Power which a Pastor has received from the Lord Jesus Christ, is not so confined to his particular Flock, as that he shall cease to be a Minister when he shall act in the Name of the Lord elsewhere.* And a little after, *I am, as to this particular, fully of one same judgment with the learned Dr. J. Owen in his judicious Treatise concerning a Gospel Church, P. 100, 101. where he has these words, Although we have no concernment in the signment of an indelible Character accompanying sacred Orders, yet we do not think the Pastoral Office is such a thing as a man must leave behind him every time he goes from home; for my own part, if I did not think my self bound to preach as a Minister authorized, in all places, and on all occasions when I am called thereunto, I think I should never preach more in this World.* Thus Dr. Owen.

We see then, that our Reverend Author and the famous Dr. Owen plainly hold, that though there be a Relation to a particular flock, yet a Minister is so authorized by Jesus Christ, that he is capable in his Name to perform Ministerial Acts in other places, and upon all occasions. And were not our Author sincerely of this Opinion, we cannot but think he would highly condemn any Minister that should be absent from his Flock four years together, upon any service whatsoever. Sure, if he be no way capable to act as a Minister of Jesus Christ, he is all that while but as a stray Bird, idly wandering from its Nest.

Yet at this time, our Author would bear the World in hand, that a Minister has no power to act as such, but to his particular Flock; and therefore quotes the words of the Platform, chap. 9. sect. 7. *He that is clearly loosed from his Office Relation to that Church whereof he was*

a Minister, cannot be looked on as an Officer, nor perform any act of Office in any other Church, unless he be again called into Office. But a more eminent Assembly of Divines at London, have quoted this very Paragraph, pag 145. and severely, but justly answered it as a great absurdity, and contrary to sound Doctrine.

The Answer to the other part of the Question, *Whether a Minister should be ordained only in the presence of that Church where he is to serve?* Will result from what has been already laid down.

The presence of Christ must be supposed, when ever a person is separated to his Ministry; but seeing our Lord Commissions none immediately, such must be present as have Power to authorize, Commission and give the charge in his Name. When ever a Call is given, received and accepted; whether it be by Words, Message or letter, both Minister and People are conceived, as present face to face. But the Circumstances of Times, Places, Persons, Distance, &c. must determine this matter; which as they may fall out, may sometimes render it both prudent, regular and necessary, (as then its the Voice of Providence) for a Minister to be ordained in one Land, and to serve in another.

Q. 14. Is the Practice of the Churches of New-England in granting Letters of Dismission or Recommendation from one Church to another, according to Scripture, and the Example of other Churches?

The Reverend Author refers to many Scriptures to prove the Affirmative, but not one of them reaches the Question, or proves a dismission for this end, *scil.* to take a person off from being a Member of one Church, to be made a Member of another. The Epistles or Letters he refers to, are all Apostolical or Ministerial; not the Letters of one Church to another, some only excepted, which is mentioned as writ by the Brethren; but *Apollō*, on whose behalf they wrote, was not a Member of their Church; nor do they write to those in *Achaia* to receive him as a Member, but rather as a Minister, or as a Christian of eminence and singular goodness.

Indeed there may be a good use of Letters of Recommendation, and especially among strangers. And where a Member removes from one Church to another, a mutual satisfaction may be laboured after.

But

But we cannot but think such Letters frivolous, when in the same Town, and at two streets distance, a Person known over all the Town for an exemplary Conversation, prefers another Ministry. Civility will constrain such persons to acquaint their Ministers of their purposes, and the same Christian Civility obliges such a Minister to acquaint the other Pastor (if need be) to whose Ministry they repair, that they have carried themselves well in his Communion, and that he hopes they may prove blessings in all other.

But as for the Brethren, We need not go to them, to make a second Speech, now to ask leave to with-draw, and to render an account to every impertinent Talker who thinks the man Married to him, and that his bed is broke into, or that there's no just reason for a divorce.

Moreover, some people are forever dissatisfied; neither conveniences of Habitation, liking the others Ministry, profiting under it, or dislike of some Customs and Practices which he would willingly be rid of the light of, can satisfy. And what must the grieved person do further in this case? Why, truly he has done his duty, and may hear and communicate, where God and his own sober Conscience directs him. No ought any Minister of Christ, to reject his claim to the Lords Table with him.

To say no more, our Reverend Author having in a former Treatise proved that persons baptized are thereby subjects of Discipline, We think they all ought to be accountable to the Society where they are; there persons being dismissed by the Providence of God, whether they have letters of dismissal or not. Elié by their principles, an ordained Minister in *London*, formerly of Communion with a Church in *Boston*, being called to Office in a particular Church, and having accepted the Pastoral Care thereof, must first send over a *Pacquet* to *New-England* for a Letter of dismissal. And don't you think he would be well employed?

Q^y. 15. Is not the asserting that a Pastor may administer the Sacrament to another Church besides his own particular Church, at the desire of that other Church, a declension from the first principles of *New-England*, and of the Congregational way?

The

The Reverend Author Answers, No, not at all. Had the Question been, whether this be a declension from the Truth, we had surely joyned with him in the Answer. It being true Doctrine, that a Minister upon desire, may as well Minister to another Church, as to his own: both being Churches of Christ, and be a Minister of Christ, there being but one Faith, one Body, one Baptism.

But had we been of the Authors Principles, which he pleads for in this book, we must have answered, that it is a great Apostacy and Declension. And when the Reverend Author first put out this in the year 1699. some of the old men and women did express themselves after this Rate — *That it was not thus from the beginning, and that he had pull'd a Pin out of the good old way, as would in a little while bring the whole abrick to the ground.* Nor was this complaint without reason, for if particular Churches are specifically distinct, if Pastor and Flock are Relate and Correlate, that give being to one another, as Husband and Wife; if the Essence of a Ministers Call lie in a mutual Election between the Church and him; then we can by no means allow the Authors assertion, *That a Pastor may administer, &c.* 'Tis in vain to plead, *There may be as well communion of Officers, as of Members;* for these Principles will not allow so much as a Member of one Church to communicate in another. Hence the acute Mr. Hooker (as the Author styles him) could never get over that difficulty, but looks upon it as unwarrantable for private Members to communicate in another Church. Neither can Dr. Owen or Dr. Goodwin (whom he styles pillars among the Congregational) though they twist and squeeze and strain hard, maintain this Truth on these Principles, nor satisfy a rational mind about it. Tho' they plead they are transient Members for that time, yet this no more excuses it, than if an Adulteress to hide her shame and folly, should excuse it by saying — *She made the Adulterous Husband for that time and all.* For if we run it to the narrow, the Administrator must deliver the Sacrament as an Officer, or not, there is no Medium: If as an Officer, then he has Power from Christ, as such, to administer the Sacrament where he is occasionally called. And then down go the Authors Principles at once, of the Churches being specifically distinct, of the Essence of the Ministerial Calling lying in the mutual Election of Minister and People, of Pastor and Flock being Relate and Correlate, so as to give being to each

either, no such; or else on the other hand, it must be said, That a Minister, when he administers to another Flock, acts not as an Officer, but as a private Man; and this lays all in common, and destroys the Ministerial Power at once. And to attempt to reconcile it with our *New-England Platform*, will be but (as Mr. Hooker has the expression) *to make the Plat-form to speak Daggers and Contradictions*. Neither can it be pretended, that the generality of the Ministers in *New-England* were of that mind in the beginning. In the answer of the Elders of several Churches in *N. England*, unto the Nine Positions, it is said, *Position 8. If you mean by a Ministerial Act, such an act of Authority and Power in dispensing Gods Ordinances, as a Minister does perform to the Church whereunto he is called to be a Minister, then we deny that he can perform any Ministerial Act to any other Church but his own, because his Office extends no farther than his Call.* And now we appeal to the Reader, if the Reverend Author must not either Renounce these his darling Principles, or own himself guilty of that Declension from the first Principles of *New-England*, which in another he would call Apostacy.

And indeed, we know well enough, that a few years ago, no young man could have escaped that odious Brand, that durst have printed such a Principle. But all is well that we do ourselves, and every other Congregational Tenet had been laudably rejected, had some men the doing of it. Let another presume, he is a *Backslider*, an *Apostate*, *Prude*, *Kill*, *Contemner*, and *Despiser* of his *Fathers*. The same thing, (to allude to the Authors words, *pag. 71.*) in one man, is a *modest inoffensive Dissent* in another, a daring Contradiction to Synods.

Qu. 18. *Is it a Duty for Christians in their Prayers, to make use of the words of that which is commonly called the Lords Prayer?*

Though the Authors answer hereto be very large, yet we shall say very little to it, or against it. He yeilds and allows, it may be lawfully used, as well as other Prayers and Passages in Scripture, in our Addresses to Heaven: That it has been used in antient Times, he does not deny; and we know that it is most frequently used by the most famous Divines in these days. And he gives us an instance of

Mr. Jev. Burroughs, which we thank him for, having never heard it before. That it has been abused to Superstition, and the Tryal of Witch-craft, we also know; but the abuse of a thing does not take away the proper lawful Use of it; nor is it fit so far to gratifie those that made it a Charm, as for th^e a reason to refrain to use it.

But verily the Author would have us more Superstitious than we are willing to be; for he quarrels at the varrying but of one word or clause in this excellent form of Prayer: If instead of *Debitor Sine* we say *Trespassers*, it is a fearful Crime. For why? says the Author, *It smells rank of the Liburgy, its learn'd out of the Common-Prayer Book.* He might have said rather, That we learn first to read it so in our Horn-Books, and are mis-taught from our Infancy. But truly, we account this difference of Translation a petty thing. And if instead of *Blanched*, the Author would say *Sanctified*; and instead of *daily Bread*, he would chuse to say *convenient Food*, we should not sell soul on him.

No, says the Author, pag. 123. *why then you give up the Cause.* In truth, then the Author has no adversary in the world, where the Lords Prayer is used in any Language beside the *Greek*; for who binds himself to a Translation, as to an Original? but the Author's meaning is apparent, he would insinuate into the heedless Reader, That whoever useth the Lords Prayer, ought not to vary one word from the words Christ gave it in; and really, then they must, like *Barbarians* to the People, *tone it in the Original Greek.*

We would offer here one Query more. Does the Author mean, in stating this Question, to enquire whether it be an indispensable Duty to use the words of the Lords Prayer in all our Addresses to God, so that as often as we bow our Knees in Prayer, we should think it necessary to repeat this Form? Here again he would have no Adversary under Heaven. Yet the Question may be strained to all this, and he has taken no care to bound it.

But to detain the Reader no longer, 'tis enough and enough that the Reverend Author justifies it as lawful; for then doubtless it may be sometimes proper: for that would be a strange thing indeed, that it always lawful, and never (in no Circumstances, not in that of Mr. Burroughs himself) can be proper. But since 'tis lawful, I'll too once give my sense when it is proper, *scil.* When People have been long

long taught and made to believe, that the Use of it is Superstitious, To place a great part of their Religion in the dislike of it; To think this a principal ground of Non-conformity, and a distinguishing Badge of a Dissenter; or, that it is too vain a Formality to compose with the Spirit of Devotion. Then, if ever, it is high time to correct such a Prejudice, and to show the People it may be used without Superstition, and that neither the Spirit of Religion, nor yet the Arguments for *Episcopacy*, *Presbyterianism* nor *Independency* are any ways concerned in this affair.

Here we would crave the Readers patience for one Quotation, and the rather inasmuch as the Name of Mr. *Philip Henry* may be of more Authority with the Reverend Author, than many arguments, when barely offered by us. It is said in the 97th page of Mr. *Henry's* Life, That he looked upon the *Lords Prayer* to be not only a *Directory* or *Pattern* for Prayer, but (according to the advice of the *Assembly of Divines*) proper to be used as a *Form*. He thought it was an Error on the one hand to lay so much stress upon it, as some do, who think no solemn Prayer accepted, nor no solemn administration of Worship complete without it; and he thought it an Error on the other hand not to use it at all, since it is a Prayer, a compendious comprehensive Prayer, and may be of Use to us, at least, as other *Scripture Prayers*; but he thought it a much greater Error to be angry at those who do use it, to judge and censure them, and for no other reason to conceive Prejudices against them and their Ministry. A great Strait (saith he) poor Ministers are in, when some will not hear them, if they do not use the *Lords Prayer*, and others will not hear them if they do! What is to be done in this case? We must walk according to the light we have, and approve our selves to God, either in using or not using it, and wait for the day when God will mend the matter, which I hope he will do in his own due time. — Thus spake the holy and heavenly Mr. *Henry*, and with him the late Reverend Dr. *Bates*, who writes the Dedication of his Life, and as he hath fully expressed our sense in this matter, so we would wait and pray with him, for the happy Day.

Well, but if this case be so circumstanced, says the Author, pag. 195. that it cannot be done without Offence, it is rather a Duty, and will be most pleasing to Christ, not to use it as a *Form*. But then such Offence must

be manifested, and appear to be conscientious. This confirms what I before suggested, That there is a reversed Prejudice people are educated in against this Practice, that they start at it as a thing in itself sinful and scandalous.

But to show we are in Charity with the Author, and all those who omit the Use of this excellent Form of Prayer, we shall close this Chapter in the words of St. Paul, Rom. 14. 5. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.*

Q^s. 17. *May the Churches under the Presbyterian and Congregational Discipline maintain Communion with one another, notwithstanding their different Sentiments, as to Church Government?*

The Author answers, *That they may and ought to do so.* And truly, had this Book contained only this one Question and answer, it might have turned to more Edification than the whole. He tells us, There was greater Differences than these in the *Apostolick Churches*. We think then we of latter Days may the better bear with one another, the effusions of the Spirit of Peace and Truth being since much restrained.

The Reverend Author observes further, *That both Persuasions have been Conjectures and fellow Sufferers, and we thinks this should endear them.* We think so too, but to our sorrow, some of us have heard how it hath been in *England*, & now, alas! we see it verified in our author, that when their own Persecution ceases, they carry on the Tragedy on others. We do not wonder at what the Author saith Mr. Baxter told him, *That if all Independants were like N. England Independants, he would soon be one.* For we can easily guess what deceived that excellent Person (whose Moderation suited his Piety & Devotion) into so endearing an Expression. He form'd his Idea of *New-England Independency* by the Authors plausible carriage when in *London*, which though for that time might be very sincere, yet either the difference of the Climate, or that his Dominion here is more rightful, quite alter him. We are assured, the Author is esteemed more a *Presbyterian* than a *Congregational Man*, by scores of his Friends in *London*. He is lov'd and revered for a moderate Spirit, a peaceable Disposition,

position, and a Temper so widely different from his late Brothers in London. He was most conversant at the *Presbyterian* Board, and ofteneft in their Pulpits, and professed the great^{est} Reverence for their Persons. And no wonder Mr. Baxter should be so enamoured of such *Independents*! Did our Reverend Author appear the same here, we should be his easy Proselytes too. But we are loath to say how he forfeits that venerable Character, which might have consecrated his Name to Posterity, more than his Learning, or other honorary Titles can. To confirm what we have here said, the Author declares how Instrumental he was to promote the Union betwixt the United Brethren in London. We only wish he would be as cordial and active to keep it, as he was to make it; or else the World will think his Zeal for it was, because far enough from home, where Interest was not touched.

As for the three *Articles of Union*, which the Author transcribes, we would endeavour to maintain them, and all the rest. But there are some Cases and Times, when Ministers of some particular Opinions will not bear to be consulted with. Or if there is a necessity of disobeying their Opinions for once, it is best not to consult them, merely to do their Counsels the more Despight. We think this modest and ingenuous. Nor can it be reasonably expected that a *Congregational Classis* (if such there be) should be consulted in those things which are properly *Presbyterian*, their Prejudice, in favour of their own Opinions, rendering them unfit to advise with in that matter; and the more serious the application to such is, the more severely would they think themselves bantered.

As to his Query, *Whether we embodying into a Church State be not a mighty matter?* We must needs profess, we want some better account what that is, before we can so esteem it. We read nothing in Scripture of gathering a Church, or embodying it into a Church State, unless it refers to the converting and baptizing of *Heathen*, and then admitting the Ordinances of the Gospel in a stated way to competent Numbers, whose convenience will permit them to meet constantly at one and the same place of Worship. All further Solemnity in this matter is *ex abundanti*, and therefore the matter seems not so very weighty.

WVE now humbly take leave of the Author and his Book, wishing there had been no occasion for these Reflections, and accounting it a sufficient Apology, that we have been contending for what we apprehend to be the Truth; and it became the more necessary to vindicate it, lest it should suffer more by the Reverend Author's Name and Authority, than by his arguments. So far is the Presidency of the College from being a Protection, that it is the londest argument in our Favour for a zealous Contestation.

Nor can the Reverend Author much resent this our search after Truth, if he remembers the liberty that the humble and holy *Mr. Baxter* once Pray'd him to take, in examining and refuting any Errors he should find in his Books, or should the Author grow angry, it would but cause us to submit (what a bundance of people have long obstinately believed) that the contest for his part is more for Lordship and Dominion than for Truth.

'Tis possible some good people may blame us, for carrying on the Contention, wherein, as one saith, though there be but little Truth gain'd yet a great deal of Charity may be lost. We hope the best, as to both these; but however it happens, we are willing to promise the Reader, that scarce any thing shall provoke us further to concern our selves in these disputes: no, not so much as to make any Return, should a Thousand pretended Answers be published; for we love not to be contentious, but—as the Reverend Author is wont to say in like cases: *it suffices that you have born our Testimony.*

And here we must do justice also to those who have first openly asserted and practis'd those Truths among us. They deserve well of the Churches of Christ, and though at present decry'd as Apostates and backsliders, the generations to come will bleis them. So a score of years or more past, the Enlargement of Baptism was cry'd out upon, as a woful declension; but the present generation feels the happy effects of it, and rising up at the Reformers names, do call them bleis'd.

To conclude all, it is the Answerers sincere desire and design, if it be possible, and as far as in them is, to live peaceably with all men. 'Tis their prayer, that God would grant peace and Truth in our dayes, rebuke the evil Spirit of pride, uncharitableness, contention and contempt.

contempt of others, and pour forth on us all his Spirit of Grace and Love.

And now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. *Amen.*

Postscript.

IT is strange that our *Review* should be assailed before it can be Printed. Yet so it happens in a late Pamphlet, entitled, *A just Answer to the Doctrine of instituted Churches*. Let them call it *foist* who have lost their feeling! For tho' 'tis confessed there are no very hard Arguments, yet Jealousie, Censures, Contempts there are, which grate hard enough.

In pag. 12. the Reverend Authors seem jealous of some *Injurious* Treatment in this our *Review*; whereas their *foist Treatise* is injurious not to us only, but to whole Synods and Nations of Presbyterians. They dare to say, that their *Gospel Order*, which is here answered, is *undisputed* in every point, from a Concessions of the Reforming Presbyterians beyond Sea; and that not only from particular Authors of great fame among them, but Whole Synods, Whole Nations of them. O Injury to Truth and Modesty! Tell us (Sirs) we beseech you, what Synods, what Nations of Presbyterians do oppose reading Gods Word in publick Worship, or the using the Lords Prayer, that excellent, perfect and most comprehensive Form? That limit the Right of chusing a Minister to a particular Church Covenant? That say, the Essence of the Ministerial Call consists not in the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, or that the Brethren may lay on hands, or that there shou'd be no Ordination but to a particular Church. You reasonably add, *Optimus ille qui jurare novit injurias plurimas* —, Though the best men in the world will hardly bear all this. Could our Authors persuade us to believe, this we would obey him, and name our selves no
more

more *Presbyterians*. We appeal (in our Authors words, pag. 16.) *To all the Presbyterians in the World, say, O ye Men of God, and of Order! What Reparation can our Authors make you for this Wrong, in making your Name the Ombrage of these their Errors.*

We are, moreover oblig'd to the Reverend Authors for their Civilities, pag. 7. *'Tis a godding, unstudied, unskilful Generation, full of Levity, bleating, and lowing Animals, Raw Youths,* pag. 15. They merit (forsooth!) this contempt for calling themselves *Presbyterians*, but even let the Calf be known by its bleating. Too late that Rule came to mind, pag. 30. *Being reviled, we bless; being de'amed, we entreat.*

In pag. 14. the Authors complain, That we pay not due Deference to the *Classis* of the Pastors in the Vicinity, and yet they assume not any Power of a *Classis*, any further than to forbid us to be *Presbyterians*.

We highly approve of many particulars in pag. 17. That the Proponent for the Lords Table be examined of his Baptismal Vow, his sense of spiritual Wants, Sinfulness and Wretchedness, his Hope, Faith, Experiences, Resolutions through the Grace of God. But then come two words, *Covenant* and *Brethren*, in Capital Letters, as a Lyon Rampant, insulting a cowering *Classis*, a bleeding *Presbytery*. But if we look over the Answer to the last Question in *The young Adams claim to the Sacrament* (whereto these words in our Author do refer) we shall find, that the Proponent promises nothing more than to be subject to the censures administered unto him by the *Pastor of the Church and its Officers*. So, Sirs, the *Brethren* are dropt, wittingly, no doubt, by the quick-sighted Author. And indeed, for the Brethren to be named in the Question, and neglected in the Answer, is a fair Negative on them. The Proponent promises no subjection to them, and the Reverend Authors sagacity is wonderful in that Answer; for the Question takes the Congregational Brother, the Answer satisfies a Presbyterian.

It seems also that the Adversaries of this Gospel Order multiply apace; for in pag. 22. *They are merely a few Gentlemen at Boston and New York.* But by that time you come to pag. 30. our Brethren of *Connecticut* exceed all the rest of *New-England* in proclaiming their
Indisposition

Indisposition to it. And by the following Exclamation, *O Times and Manners!* it seems that *Cicero* must be called from the Grave to inter-
 veigh against these *Row-Boats*, these licentious *Catalines*.

We can't pass over pag. 61. without a Remark. *The Apostacy of our Young Men* (say our Authors,) is great before the Lord. The Apostacy (it seem) respects the Examination and Qualifications of Communicants at the Lords Table, which is suggested to be in decrying the Necessity of mens coming to the holy Table with Repentance, Faith and Love. God forbid we should so accuse, or not vindicate our Brethren. This is to alledg. a Crime abhorred by the Generation asperited. — Well, but they *zealo* *fly* *disperse* *unhappy* *Pamphlets*. If the Doctrine of Instituted Churches b. referred to, that is but one; and what other the Reverend Authors mean, we cannot guess; and that Treatise in most parts is a Mine of Gold, and a rich Treasury of right Thoughts.

The next Surmize is a meer Defamation, That *Gouge, Roberts, Dolistles* Books must be his'd back to Europe again. A pretty device to praise the Gentlemen beyond Sea, and at the same time condemn those here that conform to their constant Practice.

Had the Attestation in pag. 63. been only to recommend the following Treatise of the excellent Mr. *Quick's* to our perusal and Practice, no Minister in *New England*, that calls himself a *Presbyterian*, but would chearfully subscribe it; but we believe few would confederate in its Reflections on the Reverend Mr. *Stoddard*, or favour that worse Report, That under the Unbride of the Name of *Presbyterians* some would bring in Innovations, ruinous to our Churches, and contrary to the Doctrine and Spirit of Mr. *Quick's* Book.

And to add one Guess here, Its twenty to one if any one of the Attestators knew what a *soft Answer* was to be prefix'd to their Attestation. For this would not be the first time that men have subscribed a Paper, which had they known would have been placed to such advantage, as to the less discerning Reader to seem an Attestation to the whole Book, they would have refused their Names with Indignation.

What remains is to Recommend that Treatise, *The Young Man's Claim to the Sacrament*, to the serious and diligent perusal of our Youth.

A Performance, for its kind, very perfect, and highly profitable. But the Reverend Author and his Treatise are both abused in this Impression. Mr. Quack is here betrayed in a specious show of Reverence and Friendship; while his Name is used to Combate those very men and their Principles, which he most values and honours. And were Mr. Quack here among us, and should continue what is his stated Practice in the Worship of God, he would be decryed among the *Presbyterian Formalists*, in pag. 9. as much as he is now magnified for a Reformer. For our parts, we do sincerely believe him to be our *Exemplary Reformer*, and wish our Reverend Authors would credit their Character of him, and follow his Example; for he is conscientious to have the Scriptures read every Sabbath in the publick Worship of God, together with the Ten Co- mandments, and he as often uses the Lords Prayer. Nay, a few years since this Reverend and holy Person took leave of a reverend Minister, returning to us, in words to this effect, *Sir, let our Reverend Brethren in New-England that they must come over to the Presbyterian Government, if they would preserve their Churches.*

And would it not now provoke a just Indignation to see People so deluded, and a Gentlemans Name (so dear and venerable as it is with us) advanced against his own Principles? And will it not turn unto us for a Testimony (to use the Authors words, pag. 50.) not only that we have endeavoured to vindicate the Truth, but also to do Mr. Quack justice?

F I N I S

